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BOOK REVIEWS

DISTRIBUTION AND TAXONOMY OF MAMMALS OF NEBRASKA, by J. Knox Jones, Jr., University of Kansas Publications, Museum of Natural History, U. of Kansas: vol. 16, no. 1, 1-356 pp., 4 plates, 82 figs., 1 October 1964.

This publication follows the format of the other state lists of mammals emanating from the University of Kansas. Only a few (2,000) copies are printed and their distribution is restricted to those who are professionally working in the field.

Nevertheless copies find their way to used book dealers and eventually to seriously interested amateurs. And, of course, these publications are available to anyone through libraries.

This is a very useful reference, especially to those interested in the flora and fauna of Nebraska and the surrounding Great Plains. The first 49 pages contain a good discussion of the environment for mammals in Nebraska and the factors influencing the distribution and speciation of those which occur(ed) in the state. Eighty-five species are discussed including those which are no longer present in the state (i.e. *Ovis canadensis* — bighorn sheep) as well as those which have been introduced into the state (*Oryctolagus cuniculus* — European rabbit).

The publication is heavily weighted to taxonomy and distribution as the title declares, and does not present much biological and ecological information for the individual species. I should have liked to have seen more biological information included. The author evidently anticipated this criticism for he wrote, "Lest I be criticised for preparing this report mainly from the taxonomic and distributional approach I would remind the reader that little precise information currently is available concerning the ecology of Nebraska mammals. . . ."

Certainly there is much yet to learn, but are we to dismiss King's (1955) extensive study of the social behavior of the black-tailed prairie dog, done in South Dakota, as not applying to the prairie dogs of Nebraska? And can't Tom McHugh's (1956) work on bison in Oklahoma, Wyoming, and South Dakota be applied to bison at Ft. Niobrara National Wildlife Refuge near Valentine, Nebraska?

The physiological adaptation for surviving on arid land is perhaps one of the more interesting facets of mammalian life on the desert or on the plains. The detailed work on these adaptations in kangaroo rats and pocket mice, done elsewhere, applies also to those living in Nebraska.

Lack of space is always a problem because of costs, but if listings could in some way be summarized or shortened, more natural history, biology, or other information could have been included. For instance, the account for *Peromyscus maniculatus luteus*, (deer mouse) starting on page 203, contains about one and one-third pages of remarks and one page as a list of specimens examined. The records of occurrence, limited to counties is useful, but a complete list of specimens examined could probably be filed at the institution and the space saved used for these other discussions.

I also feel the drawing of lines of demarcation for animal distribution on large scale maps is at best very subjective and at worst leads to errors. For instance in the distribution map of *Didelphis* (opossum) on page 59 — why does the Box Butte County specimen indicate a continuous range with the Cherry County individuals rather than with the Keith County individuals? I may be more sensitive on this point than most, because of my experience in Minnesota. There the European hare exists by virtue "of publication". An unsuccessful in-

troductioin of the European hare into the vicinity of Fort William, Ontario was made about 20 years ago. Biologists and game wardens in north-eastern Minnesota were alerted to watch for any unusual rabbit in the area. Much collecting was also done in the region. So far none have been collected or seen. Hall and Kelson (1959) have drawn a line all around the Great Lakes which includes parts of both Wisconsin and Minnesota within the range of the European hare. There are no specimens for either state. This in turn leads to such statements as Lord's (1963), "In addition, the European hare (*Lepus europeaus*) has been introduced into North America and has taken hold in eastern Canada, in upper New York and in those sections of the United States which borders the Great Lakes." Where accuracy is attainable it should be used. In small scale maps where large areas are covered in a small space, (as for instance a map of North America in a space of 4 x 5 inches) other methods, which includes lines, of showing geographic range must be used.

The use of the generic name *Spermophilus* for *Citellus* (ground squirrels) has been followed in this publication. The continued use of *Spermophilus* seems arbitrary, in view of the fact that a vote of 55 to 20 for the continued use of *Citellus* was recorded at the 40th Annual Meeting of the Society of Mammalogists (Burt, W. H. et. al. 1960), when the matter was officially acted upon by the Society. The addition of an index, in addition to the one appearing in the keys might have been helpful.

The author has performed a commendable service in bringing together in one place the information on Nebraska mammals. The introductory discussions concerning the environment, such as climate, soils, geology, and physiography; the distribution of mammals, the synonymy in the spe-

cies accounts; and the bibliography are the most valuable contributions of this publication.

Burt, W. H. (Chairman)

1960. Report of the committee on nomenclature

Journal of Mammalogy 41:537-539

Hall, E. R. and K. R. Nelson

1959. The mammals of North America. Ronald Press, New York, 2 vols.

King, John A.

1955. Social behavior, social organization, and population dynamics in a black-tailed prairie dog town in the Black Hills of South Dakota.

U. of Mich. Cont. from the Lab. of Vertebrate Biology No. 67, 123 pp.

Lord, Rexford D. Jr.

1963. The cottontail rabbit in Illinois

Ill. Dept. of Conservation Tech. Bull. Number 3. 94 pp.

McHugh, Tom

1958. Social behavior of the American buffalo (*Bison bison bison*).

Zoologica, Scientific Contributions of the New York Zoological Society. 43(1):1-48

Associate Director and Curator of Zoology, University of Nebraska State Museum; Associate Professor, Department of Zoology and Physiology.

—Harvey L. Gunderson

ATTRACTING BIRDS: FROM THE PRAIRIES TO THE ATLANTIC, by Verne E. Davison. Thomas Y. Crowell Company, New York, 1967. 252 pp. \$6.95.

This book gives information on the construction of feeders, shelters, and bird houses (including dimensions and proper placement for 44 species of birds) and on the use of trees, shrubs, weeds, cultivated crops, artificial foods such as bread and dried fruit, and water as a means of attracting birds. To aid in the application of the author's theme that the

proper choice of foods can be used to attract the birds one wants and to discourage those not wanted, the book includes a listing of the choice (and sometimes extra choice) and fair foods for each of about 400 species of birds, and a listing of more than 700 foods, plants, etc. showing those species of birds for which it is a choice and those for which it is a fair food. The hope is that by checking the desired foods of the wanted species of birds from the first list against the second list to see what other birds are also attracted by that food one can find one or more foods that are not attractive to the undesired species. The lists are more extensive than most available lists. For many game birds and many song birds the author gives comments on specific means of attracting them, and for Starlings and House Sparrows he comments on means of discouraging them. As the title indicates, the book is concerned with birds found in the eastern part of the country and so, for those species not listed, readers in the western part of the state may have to supplement the given information by following the method outlined by the author to discover the specific food preferences of a species. This book should be a very useful one to libraries and to any one who has or who receives many questions on feeding and attracting birds.

Ed.

BIRDS IN OUR LIVES, Alfred Stefferud, Editor. Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Department of the Interior, 1966. 1 color plate, 80 drawings, 372 photographs, 576 pp. For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, Washington, D. C. \$9.00.

This large (8½ x 11 inches) book consists of 54 chapters written by a total of 61 authors, writing on the fields of their specialization. That the first two chapters are by Roger Tory Peterson and Olin Sewall Pettingill

tributors. The topics covered (to cite just a few) range from birds on stamps, on coins, in art, through falconry, to topics more usually thought of by birders — bird banding and migration, deaths at high towers, conservation, bird watching in big cities, Christmas Counts, birds and pesticides, and the like — to birds as helpers and hindrances to farmers and timber raisers, hunting, fancy pigeons, and commercial poultry operations. With an average of about 10 pages per chapter for text and pictures it is obvious that no topic is treated exhaustively. For a library, or for an individual with just a generalized interest in birds, the book would serve as a survey and a reference book. Individuals with more narrow interests might feel that those interests could be better served by investing the same amount of money in books in those specialized fields. Ed.

STUDIES IN THE LIFE HISTORY OF THE SONG SPARROW, by Margaret Morse Nice. 2 vols., 246 and 328 pp., \$1.75 ea.

THE WATCHER AT THE NEST, by Margaret Morse Nice. 19 drawings by Roger Tory Peterson, 159 pp., \$1.50.

THE BIRDS OF AMERICA, by John James Audubon. 7 vols., 246, 199, 233, 321, 346, 457, 360 pp. (plus 40 page cross index of old and new names in vol. 7). \$2.50 ea.

These are additional reprints of ornithological classics by Dover Publications, Inc., New York. Nice's authoritative **SONG SPARROW**, which earned her a Brewster Medal from AOU, has probably been held up to every birder at least once as a model of what can be accomplished at one's own dooryard, and an example to be followed as soon as possible. Eight years' study of the population of a limited area is summarized in Volume I, while Volume II deals with the behavior of Song Sparrows

other passerines. WATCHER gives in a less scientific style various incidents from her studies for SONG SPARROW, as well as seven chapters concerning incidents with as many other species. It should interest any birder. Audubon's BIRDS is a reprint of the 1840 octavo edition, with the 500 plates in black and white on a 5½ by 8½ page. (The plates for the original octavo edition were reduced from, and sometimes simplified from, those of the elephant folio edition which are usually thought of at mention of Audubon pictures.) This reprint will appeal to those who are interested in Audubon's text, which is very readable, but those interested in his plates probably will prefer the large colored reproductions available elsewhere. Ed.

BIRDS OF SOUTHEAST ALASKA, A CHECKLIST, U. S. Forest Service and Alaska Dept. of Fish and Game, cooperating, 12 pp.

This small (4 by 7¼) booklet gives the seasonal abundance and habitat for 227 birds in the Juneau area, from Glacier Bay to Skagway to Wrangell and the Inside Passage. A separate list for Upper Glacier Bay is included (most of the birds are on the main list, too), as is a list of birds of the open sea, and marine mammals of inside waters, and a partial bibliography. A handy reference for any one visiting in that area. Apparently free from Dept. of Fish and Game, Subport Building, Juneau, Alaska 99801. Ed.

NOTES

Common Loon and Dunlins A first-year plumage Common Loon, *Gavia immer*, and Dunlins (Red-backed Sandpipers), *Erolia alpina*, were observed and the latter photographed on the shore of Kramer Lake, Lancaster County, May 21, 1967. Over a dozen Dunlins were feeding with White-rumped, Baird's, and Least Sandpipers and Semipalmated Plo-

vers. (They were photographed following numerous attempts to get close enough for a good shot only to be foiled by "interested" bystanders. The chase totaled five hours of walking the birds back and forth over a beach of some ¾ mile length.)

The Loon, which gave the typical call of the species, has remained on the lake and was seen and photographed July 1. It seems doubtful that the bird would be nesting but the site might be good on Kramer Lake this year. A second bird has not been seen although I thought I heard one on a single occasion.

—C. W. Huntley, Crete

Little Blue Heron A single Little Blue Heron, *Florida caerula*, in full adult plumage was observed on Kramer Lake on June 24, 1967. Although the bird was obviously bothered by my presence I was able to approach through high weeds to a point where I could get a recognizable photograph. The bird was not seen the following day although a rather thorough search was made around the lake.

—C. W. Huntley, Crete

Soras and Black-crowned Night Herons. Since the June rains the basins on our farm are full to running over and are all loaded with ducks and shore birds. I have about 60 acres of water. There must be hundreds of thousands of all kinds of blackbirds. There are more Soras than I ever imagined, as they usually seem relatively scarce. I saw nearly twenty by actual count on one trip across my basin. On September 23 I had six Black-crowned Night Herons in my basin.

—Lee Morris, Bradshaw

Cinnamon Teal A single male Cinnamon Teal, *Anas cyanoptera*, was observed at close range and photographed May 7, 1967, at Lake Ogalala, just below the spillway of Kingsley Dam, Keith County. The bird was in close association with

Blue-winged Teal, Shovelers, Lesser Scaup and numerous species of shore birds.

—C. W. Huntley, Crete

Northern Phalarope Less than a dozen Northern Phalaropes, *Lobipes lobatus*, were observed on a sandhills lake in Sheridan County on May 15, 1967, and one individual at Kramer Lake on May 21. In neither case were they with the Wilson's Phalaropes. Those in Sheridan County were swimming whereas the single bird in Lancaster County was feeding at the shore line in association with numerous other shorebirds.

—C. W. Huntley, Crete

Painted Bunting. May 16 I was walking along the tracks in Fontenelle Forest when I saw a bird fly low ahead of me, showing lots of red. It went into a bush and when I got my glasses on it I was very surprised to see the green back and blue head of a Painted Bunting. Much of the bird was hidden by leaves, and while I was shifting for a better look it flew on, again showing lots of red, but this time I lost it while it was still flying.

—R. G. Cortelyou, Omaha

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